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ing \$2.00 towards the fund to publish the work, will receive, carriage prepaid, one copy, or several copies at two dollars each; the same arrangement can be made with libraries. Then, for the sake of the advancement of the science of mammalogy, a certain number of patrons may offer larger sums.

When the entire amount is raised, the undersigned will take over the matter of publication, and the distribution of the copies when delivered to him by the publishers. There will also be published, following the preface to the memoir, a complete list of the patrons, subscribers, and others who have made it possible to issue the work.

Those who intend to assist in a pecuniary way in this project, may communicate with the undersigned. No subscriptions need be forwarded until it is announced that the entire sum has been promised.

Very truly,  
*R. W. Shufeldt.*

28th April, 1920.

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT

It has been decided to include five numbers in volume 1 of the *Journal of Mammalogy*, in order that succeeding volumes may run through a single calendar year. The November, 1920, issue will therefore be included in this volume, and the second volume will begin with the number for February, 1921. The actual date of publication of the May number was June 19, 1920.

We learn from Dr. Joseph Grinnell that Mr. Joseph Dixon, economic mammalogist on the staff of the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, is carrying on a special investigation upon the fur-bearing mammals of California. Much of the past winter has been spent in the field, interviewing trappers, searching out dens, and getting photographs illustrative of the natural history of the animals. Such an investigation has been deemed desirable because the real economic status of several of the species is at present in doubt, because the amount of the annual catch which may be taken safely without endangering the breeding stock is not known, and because adequate legislation is needed under which the fur resources of the state can be protected and developed. It is planned to publish, as a contribution from the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, an extended report upon the fur bearers of California.

To those who have experienced the delights of mammal trapping, the pleasures of forming a collection of these interesting and beautiful creatures, and the fascinations of the study of mammalian structure and habits, the question doubtless frequently comes: Why are not more young people attracted to the study of mammals? There have always been many young ornithologists and entomologists, but comparatively few beginners in natural history have taken seriously to the forming of a collection of mammals. This is doubtless in a measure due to the fact that birds and insects first attract the eye; they are everywhere to be seen, and their great variety draws the attention of the youthful naturalist. But it is also due to the fact that there is more incentive for their study—others are doing that very thing and men, young and old, are mak-

ing collections and exchanging specimens. No one doubts, for instance, the great stimulating effect on the development of ornithologists of the old "egg catalogues" and price lists on the basis of which the eggs and skins of birds were exchanged by those growing naturalists who came within their influence. Some of our leading ornithologists were led into the work by their introduction to those old egg lists and the small journals which contained the offers of exchange.

The successful zoologist of mature years will almost invariably confess that his interest in his first private collection led him to continue as a life work the study of some branch of zoology. The opportunities which presented themselves in early professional life may have influenced his career and led him away from the group of animals most favored in his younger days, but it was his "collection" and the fascination that grew out of his work upon it, that made him a naturalist for life. For this reason most zoologists believe in and encourage the careful formation of small natural history collections by boys. Out of a reasonable number of youthful "collectors" is almost sure to develop one zoologist of ability; and in no other way, many men believe, can eminent and successful zoologists be made. Successful business men who formerly "collected" make sometimes the best patrons of science in their affluent age.

It is the opinion of several of our most prominent members with whom the editor has consulted, that the Society has a genuine function to perform in the encouragement of young mammalogists. And how better do it than by the development of an interest in mammal collecting? Most of the stock arguments against the youthful collecting of birds and eggs can hardly be brought out and used against the collecting of mammals. The trapping of wild mice, ground squirrels, gophers, and other small mammals in such numbers as is usual by a mammal collector can not possibly do harm. Many of the species are already warred against by the agriculturist; and the larger game and fur bearing species are protected by law, with open seasons in which reasonable collecting may be done. Special permits are rarely necessary, and the rigid laws now blocking the growth of young ornithologists will not hamper the collector of mammals. A hundred or more private collections of mammals should flourish in the United States and Canada, where there are now less than a dozen. We have a very few advanced private collectors but these few would doubtless all be glad of a widened interest and would welcome the opportunity for the exchange of specimens with persons of similar tastes in other parts of our continent.

Mr. A. Brazier Howell, with the collaboration of other California mammalogists, has prepared a manuscript list of the mammals of that state with exchange values, which he has submitted to the editor of the Journal for an expression of opinion. By an ingenious system of unit values, 100 percent for a well made skin with perfect uncleaned skull, and a reduction or addition of a certain percent of basic valuation for skins without skulls, odd skulls, specimens with damaged skulls, topotypes, cleaned skulls, or alcoholics, the exchange value of any specimen of any species is readily ascertained from the list. The basic values range from 50 cents for the most abundant forms of *Peromyscus*, 75 cents and up for *Microtus*, \$1.00 and up for *Neotoma*, *Thomomys*, *Dipodomys*, etc., \$1.50 and up for *Sciurus* and species of similar size, on up to \$100 or more for some of the largest ungulates and expensive fur-bearers.

Mr. Howell suggests the preparation of a list with exchange values of all the North American mammals, based upon this plan. The editor believes it is a good idea, several prominent mammalogists have heartily endorsed the scheme, and the opinions of others are solicited. The list should be prepared through the coöperation of all the owners of private collections, simply as a guide in the making of exchanges. It need not be an official publication of the Society or in any way closely connected with it, but no possible harm can come from it and a little encouragement from members may induce some of our advanced private collectors to go ahead with its preparation.

No one can now say how much the future of mammalogy may be advanced by a few good men who may be developed from among the young naturalists who will be awakened and influenced by the existence of a such a list.

—N. H.

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### THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MAMMALOGISTS

The second annual stated meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists, held in New York City, May 3-5, 1920, was attended by about 70 members and was an exceptionally interesting and active scientific gathering. The sessions for business and presentation of papers were held in the American Museum of Natural History. The papers covered a broad field of mammalogical subjects. The only noticeable drawback during the entire meeting was the lack of time for discussion, due to the crowded program. Doctors Beebe and Porsild were unable to be present and their papers were read by title.

#### MONDAY, MAY 3

##### *Morning Session, 10:00 a.m.*

1. Modern methods of mammalogical field work. Vernon Bailey. Twenty-five minutes. Illustrated with apparatus.
2. Notes on the howling monkeys and other mammals from British Guiana. William Beebe. Twenty minutes. Illustrated with lantern slides.
3. Fetuses of the Guiana howling monkey. Adolph H. Schultz. Twenty minutes. Illustrated with lantern slides.
4. Some life histories of African mammals gathered during the Congo Expedition. H. Lang. Forty minutes. Illustrated with lantern slides.
5. Blue-fox farming and the maintenance of the fur supply. Ned Dearborn. Thirty minutes.

##### *Afternoon Session, 2:00 p.m.*

6. Resemblances and contrasts between zoologic and palæontologic research in mammalogy. Desirability of uniform standards and systems in classification, in description, in measurement, in reasoning. Henry Fairfield Osborn. Fifteen minutes.
7. On the history of the gray squirrel. Ernest Thompson Seton. Thirty minutes.
8. The Roosevelt Wild Life Forest Experiment Station. Charles C. Adams. Ten minutes.